

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1804

June 10, 2011

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
Room 8-C445
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

I write to you regarding the efforts of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to reform the Universal Service Fund (USF) and Inter-carrier compensation (ICC) system. Like you, I support modernizing these programs, including making them more accountable and broadband-focused to meet the goal of providing affordable and comparable communications service to all Americans. However, I am concerned that reform proposals outlined in the recent Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) may hamper both current and future investment in rural communities in Louisiana.

As you well know, there continues to be a need for wireless and other advanced communications services in rural areas of our country. I realize that this is due in part to many factors, including the increased cost of deploying technology to these areas, but would like, where possible, to assist companies looking to build out services in rural areas. Over the last three decades, communications carriers in rural areas have invested millions of dollars in communications networks supported not only by universal service, but also by private investment and Federal telecommunications and broadband incentive programs. Recent reform proposals at the FCC include new program restraints, benchmarks and formulas intended to make universal service more efficient and implement a new Inter-carrier compensation system. I believe that any reforms must protect existing investments, provide predictable support systems for small rural carriers, and promote broadband adoption in rural areas.

In closing, I note that the Telecommunications Act of 1996 mandates that Federal and State governments must work to advance the availability of advanced telecommunications services to all consumers, including those in rural areas, at rates which are comparable to rates charged in urban areas. The USF was established by the FCC to attain these goals promised by the Act. While I strongly support your effort to achieve broadband availability nationwide, USF and ICC reform must not jeopardize current investments or discourage future investments from the private sector or Federal incentive programs.

WCB
ICC
USF-Gen
852

Page Two
June 10, 2011

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to working with you to provide opportunities for telecommunications providers, including small rural carriers, to continue service to rural areas throughout our country.

With warmest regards, I am

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mary L. Landrieu". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "M".

Mary L. Landrieu
United States Senator



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

November 17, 2011

The Honorable Mary L. Landrieu
United States Senate
328 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Landrieu:

Thank you very much for your letters regarding the Commission's efforts to reform and modernize the Universal Service Fund (USF) and the intercarrier compensation system (ICC). Your thoughts and concerns were a valuable contribution to our process, and were considered as part of the Commission's deliberations.

On October 27, after many years of hard work on Capitol Hill, among the FCC's Commissioners, and by Commission staff, the Commission unanimously adopted a comprehensive Order overhauling the broken and backward-looking USF and ICC systems for the Internet age. By transitioning these programs to the Connect America Fund, we are delivering on our shared national goal of universal voice and broadband service – including universal mobile voice and broadband service – and enabling increased private sector investment in the indispensable infrastructure of the 21st century: broadband. Importantly, our reforms are fiscally responsible, eliminating waste and inefficiency, using market-based mechanisms to target support where it is needed, and putting the Fund on a firm budget.

The Commission's Order will create jobs beginning in 2012, and lay the foundation for enduring job creation, economic growth, and U.S. global competitiveness for years to come.

For your information, I am enclosing a copy of the Order's "Executive Summary." Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. Genachowski", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Julius Genachowski

Enclosure